

Formaldehyde

WAC 296-856-500

Definitions

Action level

An airborne concentration of formaldehyde of 0.5 parts per million of air calculated as an 8-hour time-weighted average.

Authorized personnel

Individuals specifically permitted by the employer to enter the exposure control area to perform duties, or to observe employee exposure evaluations as a designated representative.

Breathing zone

The space around and in front of an employee's nose and mouth, forming a hemisphere with a 6- to 9-inch radius.

CAS (chemical abstract service) number

CAS numbers are internationally recognized and used on material safety data sheets (MSDSs) and other documents to identify substances. For more information see <http://www.cas.org>

Canister or cartridge (air-purifying)

Part of an air-purifying respirator that consists of a container holding materials such as fiber, treated charcoal, or a combination of the two, that removes contaminants from the air passing through the cartridge or canister.

Container

Any container, except for pipes or piping systems that contains formaldehyde. It can be any of the following:

- Barrel
- Bottle
- Can
- Cylinder
- Drum
- Reaction vessel
- Shipping containers
- Storage tank.





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Designated representative

Any one of the following:

- Any individual or organization to which an employee gives written authorization.
- A recognized or certified collective bargaining agent without regard to written employee authorization.
- The legal representative of a deceased or legally incapacitated employee.

Emergency

Any event that could or does result in the unexpected significant release of formaldehyde. Examples of emergencies include equipment failure, container rupture, or control equipment failure.

Exposure

The contact an employee has with formaldehyde, whether or not protection is provided by respirators or other personal protective equipment (PPE). Exposure can occur through various routes of entry such as inhalation, ingestion, skin contact, or skin absorption.

Formaldehyde

An organic chemical with the formula of HCHO , represented by the chemical abstract service (CAS) registry number 50-00-0. Examples of primary uses of formaldehyde and its solutions are as follows:

- An intermediate in the production of:
 - Resins
 - Industrial chemicals
- A bactericide or fungicide
- A preservative
- A component in the manufacture of end-use consumer items such as cosmetics, shampoos, and glues.

Definitions

Licensed healthcare professional (LHCP)

An individual whose legally permitted scope of practice allows him or her to provide some or all of the healthcare services required for medical evaluations.

Permissible exposure limits (PELs)

PELs are employee exposures to toxic substances or harmful physical agents that must not be exceeded. PELs are also specified in WISHA rules found in other chapters. The PEL for formaldehyde is an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA_8) of 0.75 parts per million (ppm) and a 15-minute short-term exposure limit of 2 ppm.

Short-term exposure limit (STEL)

An exposure limit averaged over a 15-minute period that must not be exceeded during an employee's workday.

Time-weighted average (TWA_8)

An exposure limit averaged over an 8-hour period that must not be exceeded during an employee's workday.

Uncontrolled release

A release where significant safety and health risks could be created. Releases of hazardous substances that are either incidental or couldn't create a safety or health hazard (i.e., fire, explosion, or chemical exposure) aren't considered to be uncontrolled releases.

Examples of conditions that could create a significant safety and health risk are:

- Large-quantity releases.
- Small releases that could be highly toxic.
- Potentially contaminated individuals arriving at hospitals.
- Airborne exposures that could exceed a WISHA permissible exposure limit or a published exposure limit and employees aren't adequately trained or equipped to control the release.

